REVIEW RESOURCES

Lesson 6: Team Building

Teamwork Mandate

DOD 5000.2-R states the following:

- The Department of Defense shall perform as many acquisition functions as possible, including oversight and review, using Integrated Product Teams (IPTs).
- These IPTs shall function in a spirit of teamwork with participants empowered and authorized, to the maximum extent possible, to make commitments for the organization or functional area they represent.

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Integrated Product Team (IPT) Operating Principles

IPTs are under the following broad principles:

- Open discussions with no secrets.
- Qualified, empowered team members.
- Consistent, success-oriented, proactive participation.
- Continuous "up-the-line" communications.
- Reasoned disagreement.
- Issues raised and resolved early.

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Team Development

Over the years, social psychologists have observed the "building" of a team. According to Bruce W. Tuckerman's research, every team goes through the following stages:

1. Forming
2. Storming
3. Norming
4. Performing
5. Adjourning

Stage 1: Forming

During the Forming Stage, the team spends time trying to figure out how to accomplish the tasks and little time actually doing tasks.

Typical emotions include:

- Excitement, anticipation, and optimism.

- Pride in being chosen for the project.
- Initial, tentative attachment to the team.
- Suspicion, fear, and anxiety about the job ahead.

Typical group behaviors include:

- Attempts to define the task and to decide how to get it done.
- Attempts to determine acceptable group behavior.
- Decisions about what information to gather.
- Lofty, abstract discussions.
- Complaints about the tasks or organization.

Stage 2: Storming

During the Storming Stage, the team begins to realize that the task at hand is different or more difficult than they had imagined.

Typical emotions include:

- Resistance to the task and to new approaches.
- Uncertainty about the team's success.
- Impatience, hostility, and discomfort.
- Disunity, tension, and jealousy.

Typical group behaviors include:

- Arguing among team members even when they agree.
- Defensiveness and competition; factions and "choosing sides."
- Questioning the wisdom of superiors.
- Establishing unrealistic goals.
- Concern about excessive work.
- Perception of a pecking order.

Stage 3: Norming

During the Norming Stage, the team reconciles competing loyalties and responsibilities. The team develops spoken or unspoken rules on how to proceed.

Typical emotions include:

- A new ability to express criticism constructively.
- Acceptance of membership in the team.
- Relief that is seems that everything is going to work out.
- Renewed energy.
- Common spirit and team cohesion.

Typical group behaviors include:

- Attempts to achieve harmony by avoiding conflicts.
- More confiding and sharing of information.
- Establishment and maintenance of spoken or unspoken ground rules and group norms.
- More acceptance of all team members and their ideas.

Stage 4: Performing

During the Performing Stage, team members work collaboratively to get the job done and solve problems.

Typical emotions include:

- Acceptance of other team members' strengths and weaknesses.
- Satisfaction with the team's progress.
- Pride in being part of the team.
- Excitement.

Typical group behaviors include:

- Taking actions to prevent or work through group problems.
- Balancing the behaviors for maintaining effective team relations with the behaviors required to get the job accomplished.
- Taking steps to maintain close attachment within the team.

Stage 5: Adjourning

During the adjourning stage, the team is preparing for the group's dissolution.

Typical emotions include:

- Melancholy acceptance of the team's separation.
- Pride in the team's success.

Typical group behaviors include:

- Congratulating fellow team members.
- Bidding farewells.

Team Development Stages: Summary Concepts

Although all effective teams go through each stage, the time it takes each group to complete a stage varies greatly.

The goal is for the team to reach the Performing Stage and remain in that stage until the work is accomplished.

Not every team achieves and stays in the Performing Stage. Changes in team members, new work assignments, policy modifications, or other events may cause a team to return to an earlier stage. When this happens, team members need to work together to reconfirm the commitment (forming), clarify roles/relationships (storming), and reestablish group rules (norming).

Team Decision Making: Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages of Team Decision Making

- Greater commitment from those implementing the decision.
- Allows for more points of view to be considered.
- There may be reasoned disagreement.
- More creative options may be generated.

Disadvantages of Team Decision Making

- Can be time consuming.
- The team needs to be in the norming or performing stage to work well together.

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What is Consensus?

Team decisions are based on reaching consensus. Consensus means:

"We can live with 'x' as a solution, and we all agree to go along with whatever it takes to implement it."

Consensus does not mean that everyone gets his or her wishes. Consensus works when team members are willing to compromise with one another.

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Consensus-Building Tips

- Be open and honest when expressing your ideas and opinions.
- Avoid judging ideas instantaneously. Let team members state their cases and ask questions.
- Be willing to compromise and to be flexible.
- Analyze decisions and problems in a systematic manner.
- Agree at the beginning on the issue you are analyzing and your goal.
- Share the same information with all team members.
- Allow enough time to reach consensus, but know when enough time has passed.

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Tips for Being an Effective Team Member

- Shared Responsibility: Take responsibility for the overall team performance, not just your specialty area.
- Commitment to Team Purpose: Make sure you understand the team goals and make a commitment to them.
- Open Communication: Help foster trust among team members by providing honest, open feedback and constructively airing differences.
- Resources and Talents: Allow the team to match your individual strengths to appropriate tasks and share your talents freely.
- Team Evaluation: On a frequent basis, work with other team members to assess how well the team is doing and generate suggestions for improving the team's performance.

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